



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



**Testimony presented to the Environment Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly  
By the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture  
Steven K. Reviczky  
Friday March 2, 2012**

**S.B. 210 – An Act Allowing Municipalities Completing a Survey of Unlicensed Dogs to  
Keep A Larger Portion of Dog License Fees**

Good morning Chairman Meyer and Chairman Roy, Vice Chairs Senator Maynard and Representative Miller and Ranking Members Senator Roraback and Representative Chapin. I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify today.

I would like to comment on **S.B. 210, An Act Allowing Municipalities Completing a Survey of Unlicensed Dogs to Keep a Larger Portion of Dog License Fees**. The Department does not support the proposed legislation. Connecticut General Statute Section 22-332 states in part that (a) “The Chief Animal Control Officer, any animal control officer or any municipal animal control officer *shall* be responsible for the enforcement of this chapter” (Chapter 435) “and *shall make a diligent search and inquiry for any violation of any of its provisions.*” This would include a search for unlicensed dogs as part of the animal control officer’s day-to-day duties. Currently, municipalities receive an additional 10% of the license fees if they follow and complete Department of Agriculture Regulation sections 22-349-1 through 22-349-5, respectfully. In order to receive the extra 10% in dog license fees, animal control officers have must complete a survey of 20% of the residences that do not already have a licensed dog. This is not a Herculean task by any means. Since 1987 the average number of towns that have completed a dog license survey is a little less than 17%.

These municipalities received the additional 10% of license monies. Besides conducting the survey there are numerous ways to increase dog license compliance within the municipalities, such as following up on impounded dogs released from the pounds with 30 day temporary licenses. (There is some question about how many towns are issuing temporary licenses for released and adopted impounded dogs as required by law.)

Municipalities can diligently follow up on complaints to insure that dogs are licensed. Public outreach and education utilizing the local weekly newspaper or public access television station should be employed to a greater degree. In the mid 1980’s the Town of New Fairfield was able to increase its compliance rate two fold by the use of these methods.

Raising the percentage of money a municipality may collect from license fees to 80% will not increase the number of surveys completed. Why should the state reward for something that should be done as required by law? If the animal control officer is proactive in licensing, as statute requires, the municipality will benefit with not only an increase in do licensing but a decrease in the number of impounded strays. If you are not licensing your dog, you are not a responsible dog owner. Thank you for your attention and I would be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.